

REMARKS

Claims 3-4, 7-10, 14-16 and 24-25 are canceled without prejudice.

Claims 1, 5, 6, 11-13 and 17-21 are currently amended.

Claims 26-29 are added.

Claim 26 is a rewritten form of now canceled Claim 4.

Claim 27 is a rewritten form of now canceled Claim 25.

Claims 17-18 are currently amended to properly refer to the new Claim 26.

Claims 1, 5, 6, 11, 12, 17, 18, 20 and 21 are amended to improve readability.

Applicants thank Examiner Weiner for indicating allowability of Claims 7, 13, 19 and 22 if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Accordingly, the limitation of Claim 7 has been incorporated into Claim 1. The limitation of Claim 22 has been incorporated into Claim 20.

Claims 13 and 19 are rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicants thank Examiner Weiner for indicating allowability of Species 11.

Accordingly, Claims 28 and 29 are rewritten form of now canceled Claims 4 and 25, respectively, which reflect the Examiner's notice of allowability of Species 11.

Therefore, Applicants traverse the 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) rejection over Usami et al (JP 2-249969, abstract) and the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection over Yoshitake et al (US 6,087,032 or JP 9-320611, abstract) in view of Hirano (US 6,106,965 or JP 9-265996, abstract).

Withdrawal of the rejections is requested.

Application No. 09/869,327

Reply to Office Action of January 28, 2004

Applicants submit the application is now in condition for allowance. Early notification of such allowance is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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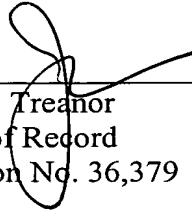
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